

Human Resources Bulletin 01-01

Annual Notification of "Weingarten" Rights

This is to inform you that pursuant to Section 7114(1)(2) of Title 5, U.S. Code, the exclusive union must be given the opportunity to be represented at any examination of an employee in the bargaining unit by a management representative in connection with an investigation if:

- The employee reasonably believes that the examination may result in disciplinary action against the employee; and
- The employee requests representation.

Upon a valid request for union representation from the employee, management has three options:

- 1) grant the request and notify the union that a meeting to examine a bargaining unit employee is going to take place and that the employee has requested union representation;
- 2) continue the investigation without interviewing the employee; or
- 3) offer the employee a clear choice to either continue the interview without representation, or have no interview.

When a union representative is present during an examination, the employee should be permitted to consult the representative; however, the union representative is not entitled to answer on behalf of the employee or to bargain with management regarding the results of the investigation. This employee right does not apply to everyday work-related communications between supervisors and employees, nor to discussions concerning job performance.

In the absence of a local collective bargaining agreement to the contrary, and unlike a Miranda warning, management is not obligated to notify unit employees on an individual basis of their right to representation at the time of questioning.

Additional information regarding "Weingarten" rights can be obtained in PERMISS at <http://www.cpol.army.mil/permis/4122.html>.

FEGLI Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefits

Did you know that OPM has a long-standing practice of denying accidental death and dismemberment benefits under the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Program when the injury or death was caused by the insured driving while intoxicated? Although this has not previously been specifically mentioned in the accidental death and dismemberment exclusions, it is consistent with the exclusions for suicide, attempted suicide, the insured injuring him/her self on purpose, and injury or death caused by the insured's use of illegal or illegally obtained drugs.

OPM is now clarifying the accidental death and dismemberment exclusions to specify that these benefits will not be paid when the insured's death or loss is caused by the insured driving a vehicle while intoxicated, as defined by the laws of the jurisdiction where the insured was operating the vehicle.

OPM is adding this information to the FEGLI Handbook and the web version of the FEGLI booklets.

Thrift Savings Plan Changes

The Thrift Savings Plan will be increasing maximum voluntary contributions gradually over the next five years. FERS employees will eventually be able to contribute 15% and CSRS employees 10%. Starting with the May 15, 2001 TSP open season you can increase your contribution 1%. FERS employees will be able to increase from 10% to 11%. CSRS employees will be able to increase from 5% to 6%. During the

November 15, 2001 TSP open season both FERS and CSRS employees will be able to increase their contributions another 1%. This will continue every year thereafter, until the new maximum voluntary contributions are reached. Unfortunately, the government's matching contribution will not increase.

If you are injured on-the-job:

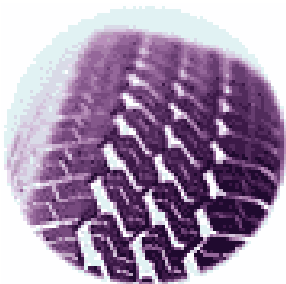
1. Immediately advise your supervisor that an on-the-job injury has been sustained.
2. Obtain medical treatment on the day the injury occurs.
 - If immediate emergency medical treatment beyond first aid appears necessary, supervisor should personally escort employee to the Installation Medical Facility.
 - If employee does not wish to be treated by Army physicians, he/she must be provided Form CA-16 by the supervisor or compensation specialist.
3. Supervisor should notify the Safety Office of the accident or incident.
4. Report injury within 2 workdays by completing Form CA-1 for traumatic injury or CA-2 for job related illness/disease (to include witness statement and signature, if applicable).
 - Consult your local compensation specialist for additional information, requirements, and other forms. --
 - If the injury results in lost work time, Safety Form ENG 3394 must also be completed. --

Winterizing Your Car

Ready for winter? Get your car ready, too. Here's what you need to know for tire maintenance and a look under the hood. Have your kids prepare a winter safety kit, and remind your teen of winter driving tips.

Tire Maintenance

Rain, snow and ice reduce tire traction and compromise your control. What's the solution?



1. Get winter tires

Winter tires dig into loose snow and compress it into their large tread grooves (like packing a snowball), resulting in snow-to-snow traction. You can choose from three types:

- **High performance** winter tires were originally designed to meet strict government regulations for driving on high-speed highways in Europe. They feature large directional and/or asymmetric treads to enhance handling and steering, resist hydroplaning and help tires work through slush.
- **Studless** winter tires are most common and increase traction on ice through the use of advanced tread rubber compounds. They're a safe alternative to studded tires, which are forbidden in many states.
- **Studdable** winter tires are popular for light truck owners and drivers who spend a lot of time on snow and ice-covered roads. Small carbide pins ("studs") that chip into ice can be inserted by your tire specialist.

2. Check your tire pressure

Fall and early winter are the most critical times to check tire inflation pressures because the days are getting shorter and temperatures are getting colder.

Tip: For every 10-degree Fahrenheit change in temperature, your tire's inflation will change about one pound per square inch (psi) (up with higher temperatures and down with lower).

Tip: Check your tire pressure in the morning before you drive a few miles. If you park in an attached or heated garage, you will "lose" pressure when you leave its warmth.

3. Check your tire treads and sidewalls

Look for thin or uneven tread wear. Take a Lincoln-head penny and insert it Lincoln-head first into your tire tread at the most worn part of the tire. If you see the top of Lincoln's head, you may need new tires. Cut or damaged sidewalls are also weak areas that can collapse under severe conditions.

Under the Hood



1. Check your battery

It takes a lot more power to start your car when it is cold outside. Check for clean and tight connections and proper fluid levels. Clean corrosion (a whitish powder) from battery terminals.

2. Check your cooling system

Your coolant system keeps your car warm. Check the level, acidity and concentration of radiator fluids at least every 3,000 miles.

Tip: A mixture of 50% anti-freeze and 50% water will protect down to -40 degrees Fahrenheit.

3. Clean your fuel system

Add a de-icer to your fuel to keep moisture in the fuel system from freezing.

4. Change your oil and oil filter

Check your owner's manual for the grade of oil recommended for winter. In most cases, 10w30 oil works year-round.

5. Inspect and replace

Inspect your air filter, rubber hoses and drive belts and replace as necessary. Also check your fluid levels (transmission, brake, differential, power steering and window washer fluid).

Winter Safety Kit



Prepare a winter safety kit to keep in your car at all times. Be sure to include:

1. Winter necessities such as an ice scraper; tire chains; extra washer fluid; boots and gloves; and sand, kitty litter or old house shingles for traction.

2. Emergency supplies such as extra clothing and blankets, flashlight with spare batteries, energy bars or dried snacks, drinking water, a battery-powered radio with spare batteries, a first aid kit, booster cables, safety flares, a small shovel, and a jug of water and funnel for radiator refills.

3. Tools and "fix-it" supplies such as a screwdriver, pliers, rubber hammer, wrench, a can of penetrating oil, an old scarf and belt for emergency hose repairs, and a small throw rug and old shower curtain (for kneeling next to your car or getting under it).

Winter Driving Tips

No matter how safe your car is, winter driving requires extra attention. Brake gently, accelerate gently and steer gently. Remember these tips, too:



Tip: As every driver's education teacher repeats, steer **into** a skid.

Tip: If you get stuck in the snow, throw kitty litter, old newspapers or dirt in front of and behind the drive wheels.

Tip: In snowy conditions, drive in lower gears. Avoid using your overdrive feature.

Tip: Always keep your gas tank at least half full.